

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Neill Cahle on 1/27/09.

1. Pursuant to MPEP §1214.04, full faith and credit is given to the prior examiner's search.

2. Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1. (Currently amended) A method of sharing a printer between a plurality of users on a computer network, said method comprising the steps of:

attaching host-based networking hardware to the printer;

providing a network communication protocol defining a command channel and a data channel;

allowing only one of the users to own the data channel at any single point in time on a fair-sharing first come first serve basis; and

instructing the host-based networking hardware to accept information on the data channel only from the user that owns the data channel,

wherein the network communication protocol defines a communication frame having at least one of a destination address field, a source address field, a frame identifier field, a command/data definition field, and a payload field;

sending the communication frame from the user that owns the data channel to the host-based networking hardware;

wherein the communication frame has a frame number and a sequence number, the host-based networking hardware discarding any said communication frame that does not have an expected said sequence number, and

wherein, in response to receiving said communication frame that does not have said expected sequence number, the host-based networking hardware sends an acknowledgement including the frame number of a last successfully received communication frame to the user that owns the data channel.

Claim 9. (Cancelled)

Claim 10. (Cancelled)

Claim 11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the host-based networking hardware sends an acknowledgement of receiving the communication frame to the user that owns the data channel.

Claim 12. (Cancelled)

Claim 13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a timeout occurs when the host-based networking hardware does not receive said communication frame within a predetermined time period.

Claim 17. (Cancelled)

Claim 18. (Cancelled)

Claim 19. (Cancelled)

Claim 20. (Cancelled)

Claim 21. (Cancelled)

Claim 22. (Cancelled)

Claim 23. (Cancelled)

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the only reason for allowance is the Board's reversal of the rejection of claim 13. Pursuant to MPEP §1214.04, full faith and credit is given to the prior examiner's search and no new search was conducted in order to uncover other and better references. The current examiner has no specific knowledge of the existence of a particular reference which indicate nonpatentability of any of the appealed claims as to which the prior examiner was reversed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

Hohensee et al, U.S. Patent No. 5727220 [column 14 «lines 28-41 and 48-61»];

Vatland et al, U.S. Patent No. 6091507 [**column 10 «lines 22-49»**];

Vatland et al, U.S. Patent No. 6348973 [column 10 «lines 23-48»].

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DOHM CHANKONG whose telephone number is (571)272-3942. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday [8:30 AM to 4:30 PM].

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Follansbee can be reached on 571.272.3964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Dohm Chankong/
Examiner, Art Unit 2452